Bazaar has been initiated by the Government to provide a platform for interaction between Indian Film Industry and international buyers and sellers.

- In the Budget of 2002-03 a five-year tax break has been given to multiplexes set up outside Municipal limits.
- The best cinema in any year is selected as part of the 'Indian Panorama'. These films are especially shown to audiences on the festival circuit in order to create, as well as cater to, a taste for Indian cinema.
- Students are trained to be film professionals in the Film and Television Institutes, Kolkata and Pune.
- The National Film Development Corporation and the Children's Film Society of India finance production of film especially by new film makers.
- Three International Film Festivals are organized by the Government of India to promote cinema.

(c) and (d) Since 'cinema' is a State subject, detailed information in this regard is not maintained Centrally. However, it is understood that various State Governments offer incentives to their local film industry in the nature of subsidies, loans of entertainment tax exemptions.

Decision on CAS

80. MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI:
SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Conditional Access System is going to harm the end-users and benefit the cable operators; and

(b) if so, the steps Government are taking to protect interests of the consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Implementation of Conditional Access System is in the interest

of the consumers. Steps which have been taken by Government to protect the interests of the consumers are:

(i) Government has specified Rs. 72/- (plus taxes) as the maximum price of basic service tier, consisting of not less .than 30 free-to-air channels of different genres of entertainment, news, sports, children's programmes and music. Free-to-air channels beyond 30 would also be made available to subscribers within the maximum amount mentioned above.

(ii) Consumers will have the choice to pay for only those pay channels which they choose to watch.

(iii) Consumers will have a control over the content they wish to view.

(iv) It has also been made obligatory for cable operators to make provisions for rent, security deposit, refund warranty, repair and maintenance of Set Top Boxes (STBs).

(v) Some Multi System Operators (MSOs), Cable Operators have come out with consumer-friendly schemes through which the STBs will be available to consumers.

(vi) Government has rationalised the duty on import of STBs and its components to make it affordable.

Policy for foreign news agencies

81. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether after keeping the issue of allowing the foreign news agencies to operate directly from India in abeyance for over a year, Government have now decided to review the existing policy governing them;

(b) if so, whether Government have called for opinions and suggestions for continuation or modification of the policy;

(c) if so, the views and suggestions received from various agencies;

(d) to what extent these have been examined; and

(e) by when a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?